

# Student newspaper faces libel suit, Administration disavows responsibility

By CHIP BERLET  
 SYRACUSE, N.Y. (CPS) — The controversy surrounding the "Daily Orange" — after a million-dollar libel suit, an attempted administrative coup and a week of mimeograph publishing — continues in its fifth month in an atmosphere of unresolved equilibrium, but the student newspaper at Syracuse University is still alive.

The story began back on November 6, 1970, when attorney Clifford LaBarge became incensed over a front-page story in the Daily Orange.

LaBarge wasn't disturbed that the newspaper had investigated conditions in a local jail. He was disturbed that one of the people interviewed, a former client assigned to him by the court, said some very uncomplimentary

things about his ability as a lawyer. So Clifford LaBarge sued his alma mater, Syracuse University, for \$938,000.

Charging that his professional reputation was libeled and defamed, LaBarge named as co-defendants the University, the Daily Orange, several Daily Orange staffers and Roscoe Riley Redd, his former client.

The huge libel suit is still pending against the Orange, but the reaction of the Syracuse Administration to the suit has become the central issue in a dispute that remains unresolved.

University officials responded to the suit by disavowing responsibility for what the Daily Orange printed, contending that the university lawyer would not defend the paper or its staff. This contradicted what Orange Editor Sam Hemingway had been told

by then Chancellor John Corbally Jr. in a meeting several days earlier.

It was also inconsistent with the structure of the Board of Student Publications, composed of five administrators and five students.

The board was responsible for picking the editor of the Daily Orange, but when the student assembly heard that the Administration was claiming no responsibility for the Daily Orange, it set up a new committee composed entirely of students.

This newly-formed Student Advisory Board met Feb. 8 and elected D.O. staffer Paula Fabian editor. The next day the official Board of Publications met and selected Larry Kramer editor.

Vice Chancellor James Carelton announced that money

would be available only to a Daily Orange under the editorship of Larry Kramer.

The president of the Student Assembly tried to resolve the issue by setting up a mediation board composed of faculty, staff

newspapers was distributed to the campus that Tuesday, and on Friday the Daily Orange staff had raised enough money through donations and advertising to publish a regular newspaper they dubbed the "Daily O." Students began selling the Daily O door to door and in the streets of Syracuse.

The Administration's Board of Publication met again Friday, March 12, declaring that Miss Fabian was editor and releasing the frozen funds. She had appeared at the meeting only to demand the money, not to be affirmed as editor. "I only recognize the authority of the Student Advisory Board," she told the Board of Publications, but they elected her until June anyway.

Questions in the dispute remain unanswered. Who has the authority to appoint the editor has not been decided. The libel suit remains unsettled. The Administration at Syracuse has started its own weekly tabloid, and Acting Chancellor Melvin Eggers says he would like to see the Daily Orange become an independent corporation that is legally and financially separate from the university.

Paula Fabian would just like to publish a newspaper.

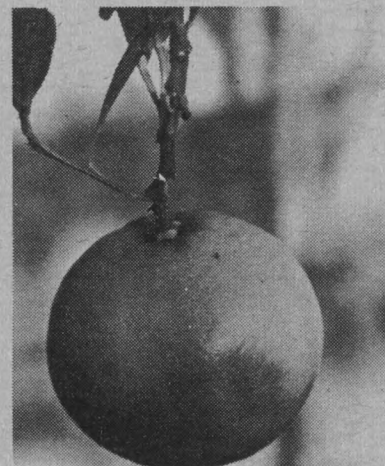


Photo by Bryan Doherty

and students; the faculty and staff representatives, however, declined to sit on the board, so an all-student board chosen by the two editors-elect was formed. The mediation board met and chose Miss Fabian.

Tuesday, March 2, should have been the first issue under the editorship of Miss Fabian. Carelton, however, still refused to release the funds he had frozen. The first of three mimeograph

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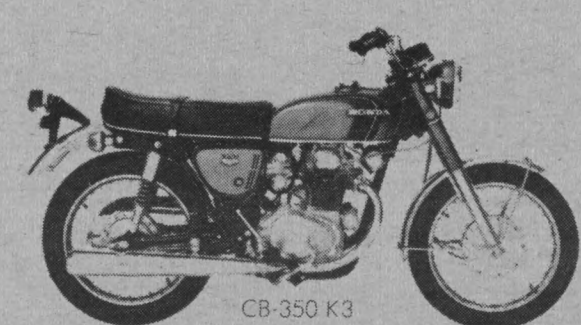
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